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ABSTRACT

Project OPTION (Offenders Preventing Trouble in Our Neighborhoods) is a peer leadership delinquency prevention program developed at the Jamesburg Training Schools for Boys, a New Jersey Correctional Facility. This program develops incarcerated youths into peer leaders through counseling and educational programs. These peer leaders help public and parochial students understand the ramifications of getting into trouble, not by using a threatening technique, but by using peer counseling techniques which allow the peer leaders to talk rationally, objectively, and intelligently to visiting students about options open to the students. This program allows the incarcerated youth to explore the circumstances that got them into trouble. Self-esteem, peer leadership abilities, and caring are developed. The interface with the community breaks the negative peer communication cycle. Project OPTION is based on interpersonal relationships; getting adolescents to talk with their own peer group; and helping adolescents to make commitments to themselves to improve their self-awareness, upgrade their self-concepts, and set realistic standards for themselves. Nearly half the document is made up of the appendices, which include: (1) screening procedures and data sheet; (2) weekly progress report; (3) parent/teacher and student questionnaires; (4) agenda for a middle school program; (5) a script for a slide presentation; and (6) a description of the cottages and program at Jamesburg. (ABL)

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PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N.

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Project O.P.T.I.O.N.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. (Offenders Preventing Trouble in Our Neighborhoods) is a peer leadership prevention program developed at the Jamesburg Training School for Boys. This program develops incarcerated youths through counseling and educational programs, into peer leaders who help public and parochial school students understand how, why, and the ramifications for getting into trouble. It is young people who have gotten into trouble that talk with their peers about the consequences of making the "wrong decisions". The peer facilitators conducting the program do not use threatening, scaring and confrontative techniques. They are taught peer counseling techniques that allow them to talk rationally, objectively, and intelligently, letting the visiting students know what options they have open to them. Hopefully, they will become more thoughtful about problem solving and decision making in the present and the future.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is an educational and counseling program which gives residents who have been incarcerated, the opportunity to explore the factors, dynamics and circumstances that got them into trouble. Residents develop problem solving skills that will help them make mature and rational decisions after they are released. Once becoming a peer facilitator, they will share their insight with public school children from surrounding communities in an effort to try and help others stay out of trouble and keep them from making the same mistakes.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is conceptualized as a unique type of peer leadership program because it works with adolescents who have had school and societal problems and uses an educational tool that gives purpose and practical application to those things learned in the program.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N.'s program works on development of self-esteem, peer leadership abilities and caring. All this is practiced as it is verbalized, learned, and shared with others.

Through the use of educational and psychological principles, it is hoped that the peer facilitators participating in Project O.P.T.I.O.N. will stop the maladaptive cycle which they have gotten involved in, and with the high recidivism rate in the juvenile corrections system, it is hoped that the return rate from students involved with Project O.P.T.I.O.N. will decrease.

A unique factor of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is the consistant interfacing with and use of community resources, such as schools, specialized adolescent programs and community projects. By inviting students, teachers, and adults to the institution with whom information and ideas can be exchanged with the peer facilitators, the negative peer communication cycle is broken. Peer facilitators now have a divergence of ideas and options to deal with and critically think out.

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The overall relevance of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is to minimize confrontation and peer attitudes and to maximize self-esteem, trust, self-respect, and introspection. They also develop a cohesive working relationship with all involved.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. offers a wide range of programs that are all conducted by peer facilitators. These facilitators have provided assembly programs, classroom presentations and adult programs for P.T.A.'s and in-service teacher training.

The program is based on interpersonal relationships, getting adolescents to talk with their own peer group, making commitments to themselves to improve their self-awareness, upgrade self-concepts and set realistic standards for themselves.

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INTRODUCTION

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. stands for Offenders Preventing Trouble In our Neighborhoods. It is a prevention program developed at the Jamesburg Training School for Boys, a N.J. Correctional Facility. Project O.P.T.I.O.N. in essence is "adolescents talking with adolescents". It is young people, who have gotten in trouble, who talk with their peers about the ramifications and consequences of making the "wrong decisions". The residents conducting the program, do not use threatening, scaring, and confrontative tactics, but talk rationally, objectively, and intelligently, letting the visiting students know what options they have and hopefully be more thoughtful about problems solving and decision making in the present and in the future.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is an educational and counseling program which gives residents who have been incarcerated, the opportunity to explore the factors, dynamics, and circumstances that got them into trouble. Residents develop problem solving skills that will help them make mature and rational decisions after they are released. With the acquisition of these skills vital for their socioemotional development, they share their insight with public school children from surrounding communities in an effort to try and help these children stay out of trouble and keep them from making the same mistakes.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

It has been well documented that juveniles who get into trouble and become incarcerated have a difficult time with the schooling/educational process. These are often the individuals who have been turned off schooling, dropped out of school, or find no need for school. They are usually dissatisfied and disillusioned with academics. They equate education with schooling which is deemed as boring and useless. When individuals are incarcerated, educators, counselors, and support personnel are asked to educate and rehabilitate. Conventional means do not always appear to "reach and teach" these turned off adolescents. Innovative programs are needed to both educate and counsel.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is conceptulized as this type of unique Program. It was devised as an educational tool that would give purpose and practical application to those things learned in school.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N.'s curriculum is not just learned, but it is also practiced by the students on a regular basis. This reinforces what they have learned, and motivates the students to seek more knowledge. Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is a means to educate without the traditional schooling stigma.

Through observational learning and inverse role playing, the offenders are able to turn their negative pasts into positive learning experiences for others. This past is not negated or discounted, but requested to be used for reflection, insight, and self understanding in the service of prevention. The school dropout now "becomes the teacher not the victim." The violator of social norms now becomes the advocate of these norms. Those who have run away from responsibility now accept responsibility. Those who have never seeked help are telling others to seek help.

The inversion of these roles is an effort to restructure the offenders perceptions of society and clarify society's expectations of them as young adults. It is hoped that the inverse role playing will give the offender a perception of reality they have not had before in the interest of personally and socially reintegrating themselves within the larger society.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N.'s counseling programs were developed on the premise that students (a) should gain understanding and insight into their incarceration. (b) Discover the factors and circumstances that eventually led to their incarceration, and (c) to develop an alternative, rational, responsible and social life style that will keep them from future incarceration.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N.'s program works on development of self-esteem, peer leadership abilities and caring. All this is practiced as it is verbalized, learned and shared with others.

Through the use of educational and psychological principles, it is hoped that the students participating in Project O.P.T.I.O.N. will stop "the maladaptive cycle" which they have gotten involved in. With the high recidivism rate in the juvenile corrections system, it is hoped that the return rate for students involved with Project O.P.T.I.O.N. will decrease.

WHY IS PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N. NEEDED?

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. works because it not only provides the counseling and educational programs that other institutions attempt to provide, but it also allows the residents to share the knowledge they have obtained. In most correctional institutions, the residents deal with peers who generally have similar attitudes, insecurities and beliefs as they themselves have developed. The need to maintain an image often inhibits the residents fromdeveloping positive self-concepts. Correctional programs often use the "scare or intimidation approach" to get residents to look at themselves. Unfortunately, it is believed that a resident must be belittled, run down, and stripped of all defense mechanisms in order to penetrate and work on self-concepts. These programs are often pivoted on confrontation strategies and negate many times the principles of developing trust and self-esteem in group members.

In dealing with the adolescent offenders, intense confrontation methods has often been found to produce the opposite results: instead of opening up, they close down. Instead of dealing honestly, they develop rhetoric and means to manipulate the program, peers, and staff. Confrontation should be employed selectively if not judiciously and can be last stage in the group counseling process, not the first and exclusive technique. Without trust, cooperation, respect, and an ability to work with group members, confrontation can be very counter-productive, if not psychologically damaging to the adolescent offenders ego.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. tries to develop the trust and positive work attitude in those who are part of the program. Groups and classroom assignments are used to gradually develop a feeling of unity. By allowing group members to take "responsibility and ownership of the program", they develop an interdependence and positive working relationship with each other. Discussion, advice and educational experiences are used to build self-esteem. Topics for discussion allow for the expression of "real feelings". All phases of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. recognizes the individuality of the adolescent and varying developmental tempos. Members of the program develop at their own rates, however group members are expected to collaboratively help each other in that development.

The one major factor that makes this program unique over the other correctional programs is the constant interfacing with and use of community resources, such as schools, specialized adolescent programs, and so on. By inviting students, teachers and adults to the institution with whom ideas can be exchanged with Project O.P.T.I.O.N. members, the negative peer communication cycle is broken. Residents now have a divergence of ideas and options to deal with and critically think about. When away from the negative influence of the institution, they have an environment to practice and develop those skills which they are learning within the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. program. This aids not only in retention

of ideas, insights, and/or points about self growth but may lead to positive generalizations into other areas (ie. conceptual decision making).

Since institutionalized juveniles lack positive self-esteem, by using community resources the program has a built in reward system. Residents can be praised and rewarded for the roles and productivity within the program. The praise comes from sources outside the institution, so it is perceived as genuine and has a more profound and hopefully lasting effect on reestablishing and bolstering self-esteem.

The overall relevance of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is to minimize confrontation and peer attitudes and to maximize self-esteem, trust, self respect, introspection and to develop a cohesive working relationship among group members.

PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS TO PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. was developed to serve the psychosocial and educational needs of incarcerated youths. Youths with delinquent histories are not diacritical in their problem solving and decision-making behavior. They tend to perceive family, school, society, and themselves in a myopic manner.

Through Project O.P.T.I.O.N. it is anticipated that these perceptions and conceptions can be altered. Many of the educational and counseling components of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. are designed to give insight into past behavior, impart adaptive problem solving strategies, and specific informational skills to make changes in the immediate and long term future.

When dealing with youths whose actions have lead them to be incarcerated, you note many social, behavioral, emotional and/or personality difficulties. The incarcerated individual in many cases lack self-esteem. They have been degraded by school for their lack of successful performance, by the family, for lack of conformity, and cooperation. By the time they reach the correctional facility, they have gone through the judicial system which takes away what little self-esteem that might have been left.

The youth who has been in trouble usually comes from a multi-problematic family system. As a result, they have difficulty in dealing with anxiety, tension and frustration. When they are unable to effectively deal with their feelings and when the ability to cope is diminished, they turn against family,self, and society in a negative manner. Many of the crimes committed by the juvenile offender are often a reaction to unresolved tensions, conflicts, frustrations, and chronic failure experiences that the youth cannot handle. This is sometimes referred to as "acting out." Those anxieties, tensions and frustrations are maintained and compounded by various aspects in their lifestyles. Peer group pressure and an inability to deal with peer group rejection often leads to alcohol/drug abuse and other self-defeating activities. When the adolescent offender becomes bored, they seek out a peer group that will help relieve his boredom in a socially counter productive manner.

The incarcerated adolescent has trouble dealing with parents, siblings, and peers. They have never developed caring and stable relationships. They often deal with others in an adversary rather than a cooperative fashion. Any type of criticism or suggestion is taken as a threat or challenge to their precarious self-esteem. When a relationship develops and the adolescent feels a closeness developing, they become overwhelemed and often sabotage the relationships rather then

let them develop. As a result, they deprive themselves of stability, security, closeness and self-esteem enhancing opportunities. Those adolescents often see kindness and acts of caring as weaknesses. They try to use"kind acts" to gain advantages and often do not see the humanistic aspect of these acts. This is seen as defensive behavior which can be changed through a gradual processing of unlearning and relearning.

The peer relationships that develop are often superficial, transient, and somewhat illusionary. They use the peer group as a means for justifying their actions. The adolescent offender uses the peer group identity as a means of escape, a way to avoid taking responsibility for their own actions. Deep friendships usually do not develop. When friends do look out for their welfare, they are seen as corny or square and the interest in these peers is quickly terminated. Peers who will enhance and support their anti-social identities and behavior are sought out to maladaptively gratify the need to belong, to gain approval, status, and acceptance.

Educationally, the youth who has gotten into trouble many times starts out being a problem in school. Basic educational concepts are underdeveloped, mimimally acquired or are lost. When they can no longer keep up with peers, they mask their inabilities with deviant behavior. The fear of discovery by others regarding their academic deficiencies and peer rejection permeates the youths lifestyle. Many drop out of school as soon as they are able and have developed a belief that no further education is needed. When the lack of education keeps them from obtaining employment or keeping a job, these youths utilize antisocial acts and crimes to obtain money and status. It also provides for their wants, wishes, and needs.

The majority of juvenile offenders that reach the correctional institutional level lack basic educational skills. Written and verbal communication skills are poor and math and reading levels are well below age appropriate levels. Educational development has been stifled and underdeveloped. Attitudes about school are negative. Many enjoy working but have no insight into what is needed to turn work interest into job opportunities. The juvenile offender has to start setting positive goals for themselves. It is important that they understand the educational requirements of their goals. They must assess their deficits and look for ways to eliminate them. They must come to understand that self improvement is an ongoing ever changing process.

To summarize the need areas that Project O.P.T.I.O.N. attempts to address, table #1 places the areas into two categories, the psychosocial and the educational. The psychosocial aspects are dealt with primarily through the group counseling process with individual counseling and psychotherapy as adjunctive treatment programs. Educational needs are addressed via the educational curriculum which address the residents learning needs and desire for self betterment.

TABLE I

Enumeration of Psychosocial and Educational needs targeted for change by Project O.P.T.I.O.N.

Psychosocial Needs	Educational Needs
1. Low self-esteem.	1. Lack of communication skills 1.1) Verbal 1.2) Written
2. Poor management of 2.1) Anxiety 2.2) Tension 2.3) Frustration	2. Low ability in basic educational concepts: 2.1) Math 2.2) Reading 2.3) Life Skills 2.4) Language Arts
3. Difficulty with caring and stable relationships.	3. Poor ability to set realistic goals.
4. Underdeveloped rational problem solving skills and responsible decision making skills.	4. Need to develop career awareness
5. Poor coping skills.	
6. Poor interpersonal and social communicational skills.	

ANTICIPATED BENEFITS AND GAINS DERIVED FROM PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N.

Since Project O.P.T.I.O.N. members are expected to become involved in realistic goal settings, it is hoped that a renewed interest in education will develop. A renewed interest in their families, friends, and self is also anticipated. With the program curriculum, its units on anxiety, frustration and coping, participants in Project O.P.T.I.O.N. should be able to manage their own affairs in a more rational and pro-social manner when they return to society, thus breaking their maladaptive self defeating cycle of peer pressure, trouble, and incarceration.

In rediscovering, redefining and redirecting their thoughts, feelings and experiences, it is perceived that a new sense of self worth will emerge.

Being involved with the community during their term of incarceration, it is hoped, this will have a two fold effect. First, that a bridge between the institutional resident and the community is maintained. This gives the resident a continual conceptionalization of what is lost during their incarceration ie., freedom, seperation from family, not being free to make your own decisions on a daily basis. Second, it gives the community a "first hand look" into the problems of juvenile offenders, how correctional facilities operate and the enormous responsibility that the public has placed on institutions for reversing the attitude and behavior of the youth offender. With the renewed awareness obtained by visitors to Project O.P.T.I.O.N., it is hoped that it will stimulate the community and family to realize that prevention of delinquency must start early in the childs social emotional development.

The staff benefits by Project O.P.T.I.O.N. because this multi-dimensional program has a major motivational influence on the residents. Students participate in such programs willingly, because it gives them an opportunity to interact with members of their peer group even while being incarcerated. It gives counselors the opportunity to listen to their clients while they discuss problems with their peers and gain valuable information on how their clients talk and deal with peers. With this information, more constructive and theraputic group and individual counseling sessions can be implemented. Teachers can develop communication both verbal and written, which the residents will more readily take advantage of because they can see a need for such programs. With the development of goals and vocational plans, students will seek out more information from teachers to help them obtain these goals. Educational concepts offered by teachers are more readily accepted.

Visiting students learn first hand what the consequences are of misusing drugs, alcohol and being mislead by their peers. This program acts as a deterrent. By going through the program, visiting students understand the ramifications of making poor decisions. They can explore the options available to them with people who have been in trouble.

Visiting staff obtain a new perspective of the juvenile justice system, the psychology of the juvenile offender and a description of a lifestyle foriegn to most educators. It now gives the professional educator a frame of referance from which they can discuss the problems of delinquency with their students. It bridges the theoretical with practical reality.

PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals

The long term interrelated goals of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. are:

(1) Reduce the number of juveniles who come to a correctional facility in the areas that the program services.

(2) To reduce the recidivism rate of incarcerated residents who actively participate in the program.

(3) To make the public aware of the problems involved with juvenile delinquency and the psychology of rehabilitation for the adolescent offender.

(4) Through this awareness, motivate and show community members the need for the instituting of community programs that might help diminish the number of juvenile offenders.

Objectives

The objectives and immediate goals of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. are "awareness goals": to provide an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of the problems of juvenile delinquency such as etiological factors, psycho-social stressors, aggravating conditions, possible prevention effort and so on.

Goals for Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Students

For the committee members, the objectives are to develop insight into the reasons for their incarceration. An additional objective is to give the institutional resident some insight into their own untapped and/or misapplied potential. An objective that is being worked on through Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is to give residents insight into the problems they caused their victims and society ("victim awareness"). Too often the victim is forgotten in educational and counseling programs of adolescent offenders. Project O.P.T.I.O.N. tries to focus on the victims. Get the young offender to realize what they have done to their victims. Get them to look at themselves as a victim and being victimized by their own actions and how to make the necessary changes to make them productive citizens.

Goals for Visiting Students

Goals for visiting students are to give them detailed information on the real causes of delinquency. This in turn will give them understanding and insight into their own behaviors and will help them rethink and distinguish positive negative behavior relative to personal problem solving and decision making. It is the goal of the program to give visiting students insight into the options they have in school, with their family, and the community. It is an attempt to give a rational reason for staying out of trouble by their peers not adult authority figures.

To adults and professionals, Project O.P.T.I.O.N."s goals are to give insight into the problems faced by adolescents. To show what causes the adolescent to become delinquent and to give them an idea of the seriousness of juvenile offenses.

A goal that the project primarily works on for all the youth involved in the program, whether resident or visitor is the development and maintanance of self-esteem, from how it is enhanced to how it is destroyed. By knowing these aspects, it is easier for juveniles to obtain a means to improve or maintain their self-esteem.

At the social level, Project O.P.T.I.O.N."s goal is to develop interpersonal relationships. To give institutionalized students a means to develop social skills while incarcerated, by using students from the community. It is through this interchangewith "non-institutional students" that is hoped the resident will develop and improve more self control and learn new social skills that will help them adapt when they return to the community.

DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM CLIENTS

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is presently working with adolescent males who have been incarcerated. They range in age from 14 to 19 years old, but the majority of the participants are in the age bracket of 16 to 17.

Most of the participants have ranged from dull normal to above average in intelligence.

Grade levels on the Test of Adult Education (T.A.B.E.) vary in range from the second grade level to approximately tenth grade with the average grade level of 5.5 to 5.7.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. members have committed various types of crimes. Offenses have ranged from disorderly person charges to arson, manslaughter and homicide. Many of the members have been involved with drugs and alcohol. It does not matter the nature of the antisocial behavior or transgression, only a willingness to state their offense to visitors. The resident who has been involved with a sexually-oriented offense has the hardest time disclosing his offense.

Racial/Ethnic backgrounds of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. members vary. Racially they are almost equally divided between Blacks and Caucasians with Hispanics making up the smallest proportion of committee members. Social backgrounds vary and it is the variety that gives Project O.P.T.I.O.N. it's unique thrust as a prevention oriented program. Because of the varying backgrounds of members, sweeping generalization about any of the racial/ethnic groups are difficult to make.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. tries to maintain a deverse a group membership as possible. The only requirements needed to be a member is a desire to change and willingness to share life experiences.

PROGRAM POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND OPERATIONS

Students who become members of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. volunteer to be part of the program. No one is forced or assigned to the committee. Students who wish to join the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee are screened by staff (see screening procedure in appendixes A,B,C,and D.). They are reviewed and voted on by existing committee members. This is done so all committee members know who is entering the committee and gives existing members a chance to air their concerns and observations about new members. This also gives staff advance notice of possible impending problems. Participation is not based on type of offense or length of sentence (it is preferred that a time goal be at least 6 months) but rather on the residents willingness to accept responsibility for their criticism and desire to make changes within themselves. The residents must be willing to assume ownership of the program and make an effort to work with others who are part of the program (cooperation orientation).

Members of the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee must attend group counseling sessions. If a problem or conflict arises between two members they are expected to resolve the conflict in an individual session with a staff member and the other party.

In the group sessions, members discuss general and specific concerns and trouble that led them to be incarcerated. They are expected to deal with the problems of being isolated from family, friends, and the fears and anxieties that come with being incarcerated. Residents must be willing to express these thoughts and feelings in a relatively open manner with visiting students.

Students are asked to take a realistic look at what type of educational services they need to successfully obtain their chosen goals. Members learn more appropriate ways to communicate and express themselves. No profanity is allowed when speaking with or around visitors. Students are expected to express their thoughts and opinions in an effective manner. The skills they learn are practiced on the visiting public and further homed in subsequent educational and/or group counseling sessions.

Each resident who becomes a Project O.P.T.I.O.N. member must be willing to accept responsibility for the success or failure of the program. The committee members run all aspects of the program so it is imperative that members are aware of their responsibilities and assignments. By letting members assume ownership of the program it is hoped they will work harder to get their message across and maintain the program's objectives, while helping themselves in a realistic and relevant manner.

All members of the committee must sign a contract to obey the rules and regulations of the institution and Project O.P.T.I.O.N. (see screening procedure in Appendix D).

PROCEDURES

Since Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is primarily an educational program, the students involved are assigned to academic programs. The main purpose is not just to re-educate these students but give them some type of appreciation for education so they will seek ways to improve themselves (ie. improve interest, motivation and overall attitude toward education and self improvement).

The teaching staff consists of two academic teachers (one doubles as a facilitator for group sessions), a teaching assistant, and a paraprofessional (who is also co-facilitator of the group). Academics - Math, Reading, Language and Life Skills are taught by the academic teachers with the help of the teaching assistant. When programs are conducted, all staff work as chaperones either for the tours or the group session. Staff members during Project O.P.T.I.O.N. programs are used for security purposes and evaluate student performance which will be used in debriefing sessions. (See student evaluation sheet in Appendix E.)

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. provides the majority of their services and programs during the academic school year. Programs for adult groups and detention centers may run into the summer months.

During the school year students spend three days in preparatory training, group sessions, academic education and other school functions. One or two days a week is devoted towards presenting programs to the community. When time allows, a school session is used for debriefing. At the debriefing sessions, feedback material from staff and visitors is presented. After feedback material is discussed and analyzed, aspects of the program that need improvement are made part of the preparatory sessions.

The Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Program that is presented to visitors is implemented in five stages: (1) Introductions of committee members and the purpose for visitors coming to Jamesburg is presented. (2) A member of the committee then gives a slide presentation on Jamesburg. (3) A group is then taken on a tour of the institution and a group sits and talks with members of the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee. (4) Then the procedure is reversed; and, (5) at the end, all visitors are brought together for a question and answer period and a review of what took place during the visit. Students participate and handle all aspects of the program except for the last stage. This stage is conducted by staff members and is used as an additional and immediate source of feedback. During this session, initial

impressions are discussed and noted by staff.

Visitors are allowed to ask questions and make comments without residents being present. This information is then used as further material for group counseling sessions.

METHODS, ACTIVITIES, RESOURCES, STRATEGIES, AND TACTICS

The curriculum for each of the components of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. varies greatly to give the students a variety of ways to comprehend the material.

The group sessions of the program are structured, but they have the ability to adapt to change and meet specific needs of the group. The initial sessions of the groups are designed to build a working foundation for the groups process. Initially, students do projects (ie. personal coat of arms, exercises in co-operation, writing things about themselves, and talk about themselves). After several sessions dealing with the individual, dyads are formed. In the dyads, students learn about another person, they share experiences and information about each other. From the dyad a "mini-group" of four is developed. It is expected group dynamics will begin to develop. In the "mini-group" it will be the responsibility of members to discuss their partner as well as themselves. A large group is then developed from the "mini-group", adding for greater integration of trust, respect, openness, and security, necessary for group counseling. Along with developing their own group through this process, students will learn how to facilitate the group that they run for visitors. Within the group process, leadership skills will be worked on and further refined.

The group topics and assignments will be structured. Group discussion will be on (A) self, (B) dealing with siblings and parents and (C) working on values and their clarification. The sessions on values will get the students to look at themselves and what things they personnally value. The program deals with examining and upgrading self-esteem. How does the student see himself? How would he like to see himself? How can he obtain that goal? All units and programs on self-esteem should be used as a building tool. Starting at the base line level of the individual student the program attempts to increase the students present level of self-esteem.

Through the group sessions as well as some academic exercises (usually lectures and written Language Arts assignments), the issue of trust will be dealt with and developed. Since trust is a difficult issue for juvenile offenders much of the work in group will deal with developing trust, rapport, safety, and a climate of cooperation.

Once the group has developed enough to have most of the members working with the topics dealing with anxiety, stress, frustration and failure, the development of coping skills will be introduced. At this junction once a trust level has been established, confrontive elements can be gradually and judiciously introduced into the group. Confronting statements will be used as constructive criticism and "performance feedback". Group members have some basis to insight development as it emanates from the benefits of the confrontative intereactions. Confrontation will never be used as a "put down." Toward the end of the session where confrontation has been employed, the group leader should check

the group to make sure that every group member is leaving the session with "no hard feelings but with support." Please note, confrontation will be at low dosage levels. This concept is also taught to and utilized by students in their groups with visitors.

The following subjects and topics should be discussed in the group portion. Educational material and information should also be given on these topics in the way of lectures and assignments during a life skills or other academic course. This outline briefly notes topics that should be discussed:

1. Deal with self
   a. Who am I?
   b. What things trouble me?
   c. How do I feel about myself?
   d. Actualizing self?

2. Behavior
   a. What is behavior?
   b. Constructive behavior?
   c. Destructive behavior?

3. Co-Operation
   a. What is cooperation?
   b. The need for cooperation?
   c. Competition vs. Cooperation?

4. Self-esteem and self-respect
   a. What put-downs do to a person?
   b. How do we develop self-esteem and self-respect?
   c. How loss of self-esteem and respect changes feelings?

5. Feelings and Attitudes
   a. Explore feelings and attitudes?
   b. First impressions?
   c. Develop ways of labeling and expressing feelings?

6. Dealing with parents, siblings and peers
   a. Discuss inter-personal relationships?
   b. How to improve?
   c. The family unit?
   d. How do I fit into the family?
   e. How we choose our friends?
   f. How to deal with peer pressure and peer rejections?

7. Caring
   a. About self?
   b. For others?
   c. Friendships?
      1. Types of friends?
      2. What are friends?
      3. Making and keeping friends?

8. Coping skills: dealing with:
   a. Stress?
   b. Anxiety?
   c. Frustration and Failure?
   d. Disappointment, let downs, and regrets?

9. Self Control
   a. Need for self control?
   b. How to maintain self control?
   c. Self control: the road to reationality & maturity?

10. Setting Goals for Self & Future
   a. Need for goals?
   b. Decisions on careers?
   c. Educational needs?
   d. Alternatives and options?

11. Conflict
   a. Confusion?
   b. Destructive behavior?
   c. Value, beliefs, attitudes?
   d. Setting standards and expectations for prosocial behavior?
   e. Aggression vs. assertion?

12. Ownership of Ones Actions
   a. Taking responsibility?
   b. Making change in and for self?

These subjects should be expanded on to meet the needs of the group members involved. Within the group, various techniques such as role playing, role reversal, "buss groups," the fish bowl, and brainstorming techniques are used to introduce, enhance, reinforce and emphasize via group discussions.

The math program will develop the students' basic skills. The subjects taught in the math program will have practical utility. fractions will be taught, but in the context of how they are used in everyday life ie, measuring, and figuring hourly work schedules (life skills orientation). Decimals are taught with the emphasis on money and figuring taxes. This also develops into a unit on percents and how they are used in selling, buying ads and consumerism. Students with deficits in basic math concepts will do units on addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division. Students in the math program work at their own rate and it is developmentally based on the individual student's math level. The curriculum of the math program is based on the utility principal, all math program are designed to show students a use and practical application for the concepts they learn.

Language curriculum has been designed with a heavy practical application orientation. Language assignments are used to develop communication skills both written and verbal. There is also a component in the curriculum for those working for their G.E.D. Assignments in parts of speech, punctuation and spelling are given to help students develop their writing skills. Letter writing is taught so students can write to visitors and also if they need a means to request information. Verbal communication skills are worked on by getting students

to upgrade vocabulary development, public speaking, and by working on non-verbal communication skills, ie. body language, voice inflections, facial expressions, and delivery. Since members of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. are required to speak to the public and project a positive image this part of the curriculum should be used to eliminate poor speech habits and replace them with acceptable speech patterns. It is imperative that students develop a proper way to express themselves.

The reading component is built around the reading materials used in the life skills program. Also, when newspaper articles are written about the program, these articles are used as part of the reading program. These articles are read silently, read allowed, analyzed and then questions are developed to test the level of comprehension. Pamplets and magazine articles that have a high interest level can also be used. Use what ever means available to enhance reading ability. The primary consideration for material read is that it is enjoyable and the students want to read, ie. newspapers, magazines, and even comic books. The essential point of the reading component is to get the students to read and comprehend what they read.

In the life skills curriculum along with what is accomplished in the group sessions, assignments on how to fill out a job application, personal banking, buying a car, and other essential activities are taught.

Since it is realized that Project O.P.T.I.O.N. members will need to find work in order to supply them with money, a job seeking unit is part of the curriculum. Students are taught about going on job interviews, how to dress when looking for work, and how to make themselves "job ready."

The unit on personal finances includes sections on checking accounts, savings accounts, understanding their pay checks (which includes explanation of deductions) and how to buy items ie. car, insurance, clothing, etc. In this unit, a discussion on how to fill out an income tax form is also included.

Other assignments are: How to read the want ads, how to look for a job, a place to live or where to go for a car. Materials that are discussed in group sessions are also taught in the classroom setting. Lectures and assignments are given on interpersonal relationships, self-esteem, caring, and all other areas of the group program.

The teaching strategies in Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is multifarious, comprised of a multi-media approach. The activities and assignments given to the students vary widely. Audio Visual material is used extensively. These materials come in the form of film strip programs, movies, audio tapes with accompanying work sheets and records. Since a variety of sources are used, teacher made dittos and work sheets are used to present a greater variety of material. Preprinted dittos are used in the Language program as they work on parts of speech and sentence structure. Material should always be varied and the material that is not accepted well by students should be reevaluated.

The curriculum of Project O.P.T.I.O.N., the methods of teaching, the activities and assignments given are fluid and highly adaptable to meet the needs of the students. It has been conceptualized that if students are given and shown the reason for an education, they will seek that education. Education would not be seen as a drugery or something to be avoided but something to obtain and use to fulfill ones educational, occupational, and personal goals. The components of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. are designed to be an non-threatening, attainable, and desirable to the student. Project O.P.T.I.O.N. tries to educate without the stigma of school.

PROGRAM EVALUATION FOR PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N.

The O.P.T.I.O.N. Program is evaluated at many levels. Staff should constantly evaluate the program internally. The staff has the obligation to look at all aspects of the program in a critical and systematic manner and make programmatic revisions when necessary. The program has two feedback loops from the community. Questionnaires are given to students and adults who visit the program. (See appendix F&G) Student and adult questionnaires differ in the type of information that is given back to the program. The students are asked about their feelings and the effect the program has had on them. Adults are asked about the structure and the merits of the program. This way the effects and benefits of the program can be evaluated in terms of its impact on those the program was designed to reach (program validity attempts). This feedback is used to make readjustments in the component parts of the overall program.

Students who are part of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. are evaluated numerous times and in various ways during their tenure in the program. (See appendixes H,B,E,F,&G). The first evaluation of students comes with the entrance of the student into the program. Students are given an initial interview by program staff. This screening evaluates the student's desirability to be part of the program ("student-Program Fit").

All students are given the Piers-Harris Childrens Self Concept Scale and the High School Personality Questionnaire. This scale and questionnaire are used to determine a "baseline" to ascertain what progress is being made in self-esteem and personality with participation in the program. Measures of this type should be used as both a "pre-testing and post-testing" of psycho social progress levels.

Each student that is part of Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is evaluated weekly in five performance areas; (1) school: how students attend to assignments, type of behavior and attitude displayed while in the academic program. (2) Group: how student is developing as a group member. What are their contributions to the group? How are they handling the group process and dynamics? (3) Cottage Life: how is the student getting along with peers? How is their behavior while they are in the residential unit? Are they following the rules and regulations in their unit? (4) Visitors program: how does the student interact with visitors? What is their demeanor towards the visitors? Is program information presented in an informative and mature manner? (5) Personal hygiene: how does the student dress and maintain their personal appearance? How student dresses when visitors are present. How they maintain their appearance on a daily basis. (See appendix E). All these areas

are used to evaluate a committee members progress and the information is used in summary reports, for feedback on student development and possible modification in program policy, procedures, materials and overall operations.

All information gathered from the community is kept from September to June. At the end of the academic year, material is analyzed and statistical information is extracted, coallated, correlated, analyzed, and placed in binder form. This information is made available for inspection by all interested parties.

Each year material will be used to evaluate the programs effects on all participants and the community. New evaluation material will be added as needed through the entire "program life-cycle."

PROGRAM REVISION

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. being a preventative and educational program should show change and development on a regular basis.

Since the students come from different backgrounds and lifestyles, programs have got to change to meet the backgrounds of the visitors. Since urban, suburban, and rural childrens' perceptions may vary; it is understood that they can all run into the same kind of problems, different methods of presentation are necessary.

When Project O.P.T.I.O.N. has developed, a necessary addition to the program will be a way to check on program members after leaving the program. In order to see if the program has had a significant impact on behavior a follow-up program, evaluation is needed. It is necessary to know how many Project O.P.T.I.O.N. members successfully complete parole.

If Project O.P.T.I.O.N. develops into the viable program it is intended to be, funding sources should be allocated to the program. These monies could be used for expansion and training purposes. With funding more innovative training methods can be used, ie. video taping, more audio visual aids to an observation room for student and professional training.

In the future, it is hoped that the program could reach more of the institutional residents that desire to become part of the program. A source for obtaining members from other areas of the institution is being looked into.

In order to effect change in the community, adult and civic leaders must be made aware of the problem surrounding the juvenile offender. To involve the residents with the community, allows the expectations of both adults and adolescents to be examined. We would also like a forum with people from the judicial system, police, lawyers, and judges to attend the program and become aware of how the juvenile offender perceives the judicial system. This component is needed and if it can be worked out it can be of great value to all concerned.

DISSEMINATION OF PROGRAM EVALUATION RESULTS

All evaluative material is made available to the Director of Education and his supervisory staff. All information is made available upon request to the administrative staff of the institution, Wilson School Child Study Team, and all support personnel.

All staff are given information about student development and program development as soon as it is available. Any negative feedback from any evaluative level is immediately given to staff in order to maintain appropriate program levels.

Extracts of evaluative material and statistics are made available to the public in the form of lectures and programs. It must be noted that statistical information only is used in these programs. No personal information is given out on an individual student. (Students' right to confidentiality principle).

If funding were to be made available expenditure data would be provided. With any and all of the evaluative material gathered, it is hoped that the correlations made between Project O.P.T.I.O.N. students and other institutional residents will be higher in the areas of fewer disciplines, more days' off from the state parole board review, and a higher rate of success, once resident has left the institution.

SUMMARY

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. was established at Jamesburg in August of 1983 as a preventive, innovative, and instructive method of letting students from community schools know what to expect if they make the decision to allow themselves to get into trouble. The main focus of the program is how to deal with tension, anxiety, and frustrations that have been caused by peer pressure, schools, and family. The program allows students to discuss their options and alternatives with those peers who have already made the wrong decisions and have gotten into trouble.

Project O.P.T.I.O.N. gives visiting students a realistic understanding of the purposes of a correctional facility. Through group interaction and guide tours of the facility, visiting students get an idea of what happens if they get into serious trouble. Residents of the institution share their life experiences both in and out of correctional facilities, to let visitors know how they got into trouble (ie. peer pressure, alcohol, drug abuse, unresolved family issues etc.)

Institutional residents participate in classroom instruction and group sessions to become more familiar with their psychological and social circumstances and events that lead to incarceration. They become familiar with the correctional system and are expected to explore their own feelings and experiences.

Guided group sessions let residents discuss among themselves the topics, information, and issues that are being discussed in sessions with visiting students.

The Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee has developed a set of responsibilities that they believe they have toward themselves and the visiting students. The development and implementation of the program is handled to a significant extent by the residents. The program includes a guided tour of the institution, filmstrip presentation, and group discussions.

Much of the responsibility for the sucess or failure of the program is given to the residents. This gives a motivational component to the program. Each student is made fully aware of their duties and contributions toward the program. The more understanding the resident has, the more comfortable they feel about taking on responsibility and assuming ownership of their behavioral decisions.

Evaluation material and feedback is obtained from the visiting students, adults, teachers and staff, as well as themselves. This information is instrumental in the programs development revisions and is used as feedback and an incentive tool in the students performance in the program.

The program is based on interpersonal relationships; getting adolescents to talk with their own peer group, make commitments to themselves, to improve their self awareness, upgrade self concept and set realistic standards for themselves.

If Project O.P.T.I.O.N. can break the self defeating maladaptive cycle, it will have a positive broad base effect on the community. Fewer adolescents will get into trouble, fewer residents will return to institutions, the community will have to deal with fewer offenses and less victims.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND SUBJECTS

The following is a list of terms and subjects that the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee uses and addresses in the programs they present to the public.

Herman Act - The New Jersey Code of Juvenile Justice, enacted January 1, 1984. This code gives minimum sentencing, restitution payments and adult sentencing for juveniles over the age fourteen.

Friends - Someone you have a relationship with on a continuous basis.

> True Friend - A positive relationship with someone who looks out for your best interest and does not want to see you in trouble.
>
> Street Friend - Someone who you run with on the street, those people who are getting into and causing the same kinds of problems you are.
>
> Drinking Buddies - Those people you are getting high with either with drugs or alcohol.

Trust - That element in a relationship between two people when you can tell them anything and it will not get back to anyone else. (confidentiality and comfort)

Drugs - Any substance that causes biochemical and neurological changes in the body.

Headrush - The effect of light headness or unusual feeling you get in your head after sniffing a substance.

Twentyfour-Seven Lock-up - Being locked up in a room for twentyfour hours a day, seven days a week. Usually used in conjunction with punishment.

Lock Down - Being kept in your room for a short period of time or being put in your room for the night at a time earlier then the rest of the residents.

Parole - Serving the rest of your sentence, but it is done out on the street. This is considered the string or line back to the institution. Easy access back to jail.

Probation - What the judge gives you instead of sending you away. Easy time usually considered a get over.

Get Over - Anything you do of an undesirable nature that you get away with. Usually associated with conning or manipulating someone.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND SUBJECTS CON'T.

Deterrents - Anything positive or negative (usually thought of as negative) that will keep juveniles from getting into trouble.

Put Downs - Any statement or gesture that makes a person mad or feel bad.

Success - Making it on the outside. Being able to stay out of jail, getting a job and never going back to jail.

Respect - Talking and acting nice to someone and expecting them to do the same in return. If you give respect, respect is expected in return.

Play Fiends - Anybody who is never serious. Those who act silly, do things against the rules and regulations and who will get you into trouble if you get involved with them.

The Bricks - Being on the street, back in the community, being home.

APPENDIXES

SCREENING PROCEDURE

1. Basic Criteria for Screening

   1. Time Goal - residents should have a time goal of 6 months or more. It is felt that 6 months is needed for residents development.
   2. Express a desire to be a participant in Project O.P.T.I.O.N.
   3. Must attend A.M. school amd be willing to particpate in group activities and academic programs. Students entering the program who have A.M. school work assignments will be required to change.
   4. Must be willing to accept on a consistent basis, the program responsibilities for visiting students and for themselves.
   5. Must be willing to accept the rules and regulations for Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee members. Must sign contract with committee.

2. Procedure for Evaluation

   1. Fill out screening data sheet. Get back round information.
   2. Explain about Project O.P.T.I.O.N.
   3. Seek a verbal commitment.
      Then ask prospective member what they feel they can offer.
   4. Explain students Responsibilities
      To Visitors
      To themselves
      To the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee
   5. Ask for a verbal commitment to accept the proposed responsibilities.
   6. Explain the rules and regulations within the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. contract.
   7. If a new member is willing to accept and ascribe to contract conditions, new member will sign and date contract.

3. Interviewer-Should look for the following:

   1. What resident hopes to offer (How he expresses his desire to contribute.)
   2. Residents willingness to share his experiences.
   3. That resident accepts he has a problem and is willing to deal with it.
   4. Has a desire to work with peers and younger children in an attempt to keep them out of trouble.

5. That resident presents a neat personal appearance.
   Has good personal hygiene habits
   Clothing is presentable.
   Is generally a neat individual

6. Has a willingness to set new goals for himself

7. Realized that being incarcerated is not an exceptable lifestyle.

8. Is willing to work in a group setting with other Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee members.

9. What gains does the resident hope to obtain be being part of this program.

PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N.
SCREENING
DATA SHEET

Name_____ S.N._____ Age____ D.O.B._____

County From_____

No. Younger Siblings_____ No. of Parents in Home_____

Committing Offense_____

Is this your first offense? Yes ___ No ___

How many times had contact with the law? _____

Sentence: _____

Time Goal: _____

Have a history of Alcohol Yes or No
Drugs Yes or No

Comments:_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Evaluator _____
Date of Evaluation _____

APPENDIX B

RESPONSIBILITIES TO VISITING STUDENTS

1. Encourage them to stay out of Jamesburg.
2. Be honest with students about our confinements at Jamesburg.
3. Answer all questions in a pleasant courteous manner.
4. Try to give students insight into wht people get into trouble.
5. Help them find alternative ways to deal with boredom, loneliness, family, and money problems.
6. Let the students know if they don't get into trouble, they won't come to Jamesburg.
7. Be truthful and courteous.
8. Make sure students understand the rules and regulations that govern Jamesburg.
9. To make our feelings known so that they might learn from our experiences.
10. Watch out for the students when out on grounds.
11. Make sure that the students know that getting into trouble isn't cool.
12. Give students positive reasons for staying out of Jamesburg.
13. To watch our language and speak to the visitors in a proper manner.

APPENDIX C

RESPONSIBILITIES TO OURSELVES

1. Help ourselves by helping others.
2. Be honest with our own feelings
3. Try to work out for ourselves ways of dealing with our own problems.
4. Discover alternative ways to deal with boredom, lonliness, family and money problems.
5. Become more aware of our surroundings and how they affect us
6. Work with committee members to provide the best program possible.
7. To be willing to share our experiences with others.
8. To try and resolve conflicts within ourselves.
9. To try to develop our own awareness and perceptions.
10. To try to work with others without fighting or getting into arguments.
11. To improve our language and try not to use profanity as much.
12. To teach, to help and to learn from our dealings with our student visitors.

Below are the criteria necessary to be part of the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee. The people chosen to work with this program must display appropriate and acceptable behaviors most of the time while at Jamesburg. Each person wishing to work with this program must abide by the following:

1. Must be maintaining good behavior in cottage, groups, and school.
   (a) Have no major disciplinaries one month prior to being considered a member.
   (b) Minor infractions have been kept to a minimum.

2. All new members to the committee must have approval of present committee members and the endorsement of cottage staff.

3. Must display an open and honest demeanor in cottage group sessions.

4. Must be willing to share experiences in an empathetic positive manner.

5. Must be willing to maintain a cooperative and open relationship with all committee members.

6. Must be able to communicate their thoughts without the use of profanity.

7. Must be willing and able to speak openly with others.

8. Must have a desire to help themselves as well as others.

9. Must be able to accept constructive criticism.

10. Anyone accepted to the committee can be removed by a vote from the other committee members or staff recommendation.

11. Members must display a mature, polite attitude towards staff, peers, and visitors.

12. Must be willing to keep information confidential and treat all information in an adult manner.

13. Must be willing to accept all rules, regulations and assignments established by Jamesburg and the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee.

14. Must be willing to abide by and work with the established Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Program.

I have read the above criteria for being a Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee member and accept the responsibility to follow all the rules and regulations pertaining to this program.

Signature_____

Date_____

APPENDIX D

WEEKLY PROGRESS REPORT

The following report is made on each Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee member on a weekly basis. Circle how you think the student did for the week. Base your opinion only on the students actions for the week.

Please circle only those areas which you are directly involved. Circle only one comment per question. If more that one person has impact on a certain area, make the comment a circled consensus opinion.

CLASSROOM PARTICIPATION

Attemps classroom assignment	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Maintains a good attitude while in class	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Is cooperative with peers & staff	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Completes assignments on time	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Follows rules & regulations of classroom	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Performs work to ability	Always Frequently Occasionally Never

GROUP PARTICIPATION

Attempts to apply what is learned	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Talks openly with peers	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Shares experiences in group	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Accepts constructive criticism	Always Frequrntly Occasionally Never
Listens while others talk	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Accepts opinions of others	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Offers positive solutions to topics being discussed	Always Frequently Ocassionally Never

PERSONAL APPEARANCE & HYGIENE

Personal Hygiene is	Good Fair Poor
Appropriately dressed on program days	Yes No
Appropriately dressed when school is in	Yes No
Hair is maintained neatly	Yes No
Clothes are clean & maintained properly	Yes No

APPENDIX E

COTTAGE PARTICIPATION

Follows rules & regulations of cottage	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Maintains room in proper order	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Gets along with peers	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Respects and is cooperative with staff	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Completes tasks he is asked to perform	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Participates willingly in cottage activities	Always Frequently Occasionally Never

PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

Is courtesy to visitors	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Speaks clearly when talking	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Use Profanity	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Give Proper information	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Comes across in an honest manner	Always Frequently Occasionally Never
Answers questions in an appropriate manner.	Always Frequently Occasionally Never

ADULT / PARENT / TEACHER

QUESTIONNAIRE

Now that you have observed and experienced our program and the institution, we would appreciate you taking some time to answer this questionnaire. The feedback which you give will help us provide better information to all the students who participate from your school.

1. Was the tour of Jamesburg:

   A. An effective deterent
   B. Will have no deterring effect on students
   C. No opinion

2. Was the group session with resident:

   A. An effective deterent
   B. Will have no deterring effect on students
   C. No opinion

3. Did the student chaperones present descriptions of the places visited in a clear and understandable manner?

   3.1 A. Yes
   B. No
   C. No opinion

   3.2 Explain Why

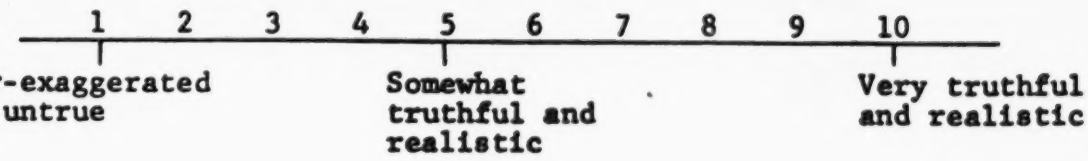
4. Did group members answer questions in a clear and appropriate manner?

   4.1 A. Yes
   B. No

   4.2 Explain Why:

APPENDIX F

5. How truthful or realistic did you find the information presented by the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee?



6. Was your visit to Project O.P.T.I.O.N. a useful bridge between what is being taught in the classroom and what is actually happening to juvenile offenders?

6.1 A. Yes
B. No

6.2 Please expalin why:

7. Has your opinion of Jamesburg changed?

A. positively
B. negatively
C. remained the same

8. From a psychological prevention and educational point of view, do you see a value in taking students on field trips to places like Jamesburg?

8.1 A. Yes
B. No

8.2 In what specific ways:

9. In your opinion, will programs such as the one presented by the residents of Jamesburg, have any impact upon the students who visit?

   9.1 A. Yes
   B. No

   9.2 Please share how the impact would be felt or seen:

10. Please rank in order, the parts of the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. program that you like the most. Use 1 most, 2 second, 3 for third and so on:

____ Tour of grounds
____ Visiting the housing units
____ Group discussions
____ Panel discussion (if it applies)
____ Individual sessions (only if it applies)
____ Sessions with a staff at end of program
____ Slide presentation
____ Talking with Cottage Officer
____ Other (Specify)

11. On a scale of 1 to 10, beginning with 1 -low/poor program and 10 -high/excellent program, how would you rate the program that was presented to your class?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Poor Good Excellent

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Now that you have been through the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. program, please take a few minutes to reflect on your experience, then fill out this questionnaire based on your feelings and perceptions of the program.

Answer the following questions by filling in the scale 1 -10. 1 is a low or poor response, 10 is a high or excellent response.

1. Did you like the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. tour of the institution?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Poor Good Excellent

2. Did you find the group sessions interesting?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Poor Good Excellent

3. What was your opinion of the information presented by the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee members?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not Interesting Interesting Very Interesting

4. How truthful or realistic did you find the information presented by the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Committee?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Over-exaggerated and untrue Somewhat truthful and realistic Very Truthful and realistic

5. What is your overall impression of the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. Program?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Poor Good Excellent

Appendix G

6. Would you want to come to a place like Jamesburg to serve time?

   A. Yes
   B. No
   C. No real opinion

7. What is the most important thing you learned from the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. program?

8. Do you think the punishments discussed by the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. committee were:

   A. Too severe
   B. Too light
   C. Reasonable

9. If you had your favorite possession stolen and the person who stole it was taken to court, and you are given the opportunity to give out the punishment, and if this was the persons first offense, would you:

   A. Let him go and see what happens
   B. Send him home to his parents with a warning
   C. Send hime to jail

10. Now that you have gone through the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. program. has your opinion about the need for a good education

    A. Increased
    B. Decreased
    C. Still don't like school
    D. Stay the same
    E. No opinion

This form is used to evaluate each committee members' speaking ability. Each staff member evaluates tour and group committee members in all areas. Since verbal communication seems to be a problem with incarcerated youths, verbal communication skills are taught and evaluated often. This information is shared with the students and suggestions are offered on how to improve their verbal communication skills.

EVALUATION SHEET

Speaker ..... Topic .....

	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak
Introduction				
Organization				
Conclusion				
Use of notes				
Posture				
Voice				
Pronunciation				
Other comments ..				

Critic .....

APPENDIX H

AGENDA FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

The following topics are discussed in depth or in part during the Project O.P.T.I.O.N. program. All committee members will try to stress as many points as possible when talking to visitors.

1. The problems and offenses that lead to being sent to Jamesburg.

2. How it feels to be sent to Jamesburg.

3. What problems you face while being confined at Jamesburg
   a. The loneliness
   b. The boredom
   c. The fear
   d. The frustration, anxiety, stress

4. How life changes after serving time
   a. While in Jamesburg
   b. After leaving Jamesburg
   c. How relationships change
      1. with parents
      2. with siblings
      3. with friends

5. What being in Jamesburg teaches you
   a. About yourself
   b. About others

6. Discuss the different types of people you come in contact with
   a. Inmates
   b. Staff
   c. Others in authority
      1. Parole Board members
      2. Judges and Lawyers

7. Discuss the Herman Act, inacted January 1, 1984
   a. Length of sentence (1/3 of what judges gives is minimum)
   b. Sentenced as adult after age 14
   c. Names printed in paper
   d. May have to pay restitution
      1. Violent crimes commission
      2. Victim Compensation Act
   e. Explain how juveniles are sentenced

8. Discuss on Trust and Friendship
   a, Lack of Trust
      1. Outside Jamesburg
      2. Inside Jamesburg
   b. Friendship
      1. True friends
      2. Street Buddies
      3. How to develop lasting friendships

9. Respect
   a. How you loose your respect
   b. How hard it is to regain respect when lost
   c. Listening to teachers and parents
   d. Developing a positive self-image

10. Discuss the need to find alternative ways to deal with problems
   a. Ways that won't get you into trouble
   b. Ways of preventing yourself from getting hurt
      1. Physically
      2. Mentally
   c. Finding positive ways to express yourself

11. Preparing for the Future
   a. The need for obtaining and education
   b. setting goals for yourself
   c. Need for getting and holding a job

12. The Use of Drugs and Alcohol
   a. How easy to get involved
   b. Finding alternative ways to deal with problems
   c. Developing a dependency on drugs
   d. Warning signs of drug dependency

AGENDA

The following agenda will be used as a guide for the round table discussion between the students of Pemberton Township School and the Wilson School at Jamesburg. The topics with asterisks will be discussed at some length.

TOPICS

*I. Routine of Jamesburg

A. How residents days are spent
B. What is done with the residents time
C. What problems are faced while being, confined at Jamesburg
   1. Discuss loneliness and boredom of being confined.

*II. Opinions of why people get into trouble
A. How Jamesburg residents got into trouble
B. Things that lead people into trouble
C. Warning signs of those getting into trouble
D. Alternate methods to staying out of trouble
E. Ways of dealing with problems
   1. Family problems
   2. Problems in school
   3. Peer pressure/Peer rejection

III. Juvenile Correction Programs
A. How helpful are programs at Jamesburg
B. Discuss effective programs
C. Programs that need changing and how they should be changed
D. What changes are needed in the corrections systems
E. What deterrents are needed:
   1. What will keep juveniles out of serious trouble
F. What new programs might benefit juvenile offenders

*IV. Success
A. How successful do residents feel they will be after leaving Jamesburg?
B. How can you successfully change your life to stay out of trouble
C. What things are needed for successful lives
** D. What elements mark the difference between success and failure

V. Programs
A. Information about Peer Leadership Program
   1. Target group identified
   2. Success rate
   3. Problems with students they work with
B. Information on Operation Aware
   1. Major premise (overview of program)
   2. Problems they incur

VI. Summation and Closing
A. Question and Answer Period
B. Final Statement

SCRIPT FOR SLIDE PRESENTATION GIVEN AT BEGINNING OF EACH SESSION
OF PROJECT O.P.T.I.O.N.

Slide #1 This is the main gate to Jamesburg. Once you're brought through this archway in a County Sheriff's Car it will be sometime before you will see it again. You will note that Jamesburg has been in existance since 1866.

Slide #2 This is the Chapel. It is an interdenominational chapel. All the different religions hold services here.

Slide #3 This is Center of Operations - To the right of this picture you have movement control. All residents movements on grounds are controlled through here. Every resident going from one place to another must pass through this area. To the left are the administration offices, the Superintendents office. Classification Office, Parole Board Room and State Workers Offices are in this part of the building.

Slide $4 This is the Juvenile Reception Unit. JRU for short. This is the first place new residents come when they enter Jamesburg. Residents sent to Jamesburg are brought here by deputies from the county sheriff's office.

Slide #5 This is the main and only entrance to J.R.U. Just to the left of this door is a control booth. When entering the officer in that booth will open the gate. You walk into the passage way in front of the white gate. The blue gate is closed and locked. Then the white gate is opened and you enter J.R.U.

Slide #6 This is the holding tank you are placed in this room immediately after entering J.R.U. In here your measurements are taken so you can be fitted for state issued clothes.

Slide #7 This is the admissions room. All the paper work for processing you for confinement to Jamesburg is done here. Your state number is issued to you at this time. You are strip searched and the officer gives you a robe to put on. All your clothing and personal belongings are placed in a card board container and are sent home to your family at your cost.

Slide #8 This is the shower room. In this room you are made to take a shower. The officer gives you some disinfectant soap. This soap is to kill body lice or other parasites that you might bring into Jamesburg.

Slide #9 This is the examination room. In this room you are given a complete physical examination. Your height and weight are checked. Your are given an eye examination, a T.B. test, tetenus shot and blood is drawn for testing. The doctor gives you an examination before sending you into J.R.U.

Slide #10 This is the Identification Office (I.D. office) at this station your picture is taken. One copy of the picture is made for your identification card and another is placed in your file.

APPENDIX K

Slide #11 You are then finger printed. This is also used for identification purposes.

Slide #12 You are then taken to the second floor of J.R.U. to this officers station here you will be assigned a room.

Slide #13 The room you are assigned is rather small, you have a bed, a sink and a toilet. While you are in this room you will be required to go to bed at 7:30P.M. and you will be awakened at about 8:00 A.M. You stay in this room until staff feel you have adjusted to your confinement at Jamesburg.

Slide #14 This is the dormatory, when staff feel you are ready they will move you here. Here you are assigned a job and are given a few more priviledges. Living in the dorm has it's problems. For one thing it can be a fronting zone. Also, with so many residents the noise level is high making it hard to read, listen to music or even think.

Slide #15 This is J.R.U.'s dining area. The food is brought in from the main kitchen. So it comes in at times cold. Eating is done in shifts upstairs eats then downstairs. If there are a lot of people in J.R.U. this area can become crowded.

Slide #16 This is J.R.U.'s Gym. In here we play basketball. That's about all that is played. You might be able to do some exercise but it's mostly for basketball. If you don't play basketball J.R.U. can get boring.

Slide #17 This is cottage Five. Five is an alcohol Treatment Unit. This cottage houses 40 residents and each resident has his own room.

Slide #18 This is the officers station which is visible to all three wings of C-5. A wing is for residents with Alcohol problems, B wing is the honor wing for residents who are trying to abide by the rules and do what is right. C wing is for new students and for residents with behavior problems. To the right in this picture is the T.V. room and the door to the left is the Game Room.

Slide #19 This is one of the rooms in C-5. Each room has a bed, a sink, a toilet, a foot locker and a dresser to hang clothes. You will note how messy this room is. The rooms in the cottage are to be kept neat and clean. This resident could have gotten a charge for leaving his room this way. But those are the kind of people you <u>have</u> to live with when you come to Jamesburg. You live with people who don't care about anything. Themselves, others, they care about nothing.

Slide #20 This is the door for hospital line. Residents come here 3 times a day to get medication, to see the nurse or to make an appointment with the doctor.

Slide #21 This is the main entrance to the hospital, you come here for doctors and dentist appointments. If you are ill and can't stay in the units you come here. If you are really sick or need special treatment, the custody officers take you to a hospital off grounds. We are taken to the hospital in handcuffs and shackles and you have to sit with all the people passing by like that until a doctor can see you.

The wing off to the left is for the girls from Terrell their medical problems are also treated here.

Slide #22 This is the community house. This is where the residents have their visits. Some cottages have visiting days on Saturday and others on Sunday. You visit with your family (if they come) in one large room with all the other residents who's visiting time is that day. You are given a one hour visit. It is noisey here, you have no privacy and at the end of the hour your family leaves and you stay. You wonder as you return to your unit whether they will come back. As for holidays if the holiday falls on your visiting day you get a holiday visit. If not you wait until your next visit.

Slide #23 This is the Boy Dining Room (BDR for short). Residents are brought here 3 times a day to eat. When you come here you stand in line against the wall and you move in front of the serving line where you are served by residents who work there. Each cottage is assigned an area in the BDR. You must sit in that area. You eat with your cottage and there is no associating with members of other units.

Slide #24 This is the control center and campus shop. Toilettries and other small items are purchased here with the money we earn working. Since no resident is allowed money all transactions are done on paper. To the left is the control center. All movements of residents are controlled from this area. A count is taken five (5) times a day to ensure that no one is missing or has escaped.

Slide #25. This is cottage ten. This unit houses the older more sophisticated residents. The residents housed here usually have had trouble adjusting to other cottages. Many of the residents who don't make it here are sent to other facilities.

Slide #26 This is cottage Twelve. It is a dormitory type cottage. This is also the college program. Residents who have gotten their G.E.D. and who are usually sentenced here for awhile can avail themselves of this program to further their education.

Slide #27 This is the inside of a dormitory cottage. 40 beds in a dorm. Residents are only allowed in here at bed time. Some of the problems with this type of cottage is there is a lot of stealing, and it is noisey at night. Residents all playing different types of music as loud as possible makes it impossible to read, study or go to sleep early.

Slide #28 This is the crow's nest. The night guard used to sit here and watch you while you slept. But if a fight or something started he had to run down the steps to break it up. Now the night guard sits right inside the doorway to make sure nothing happens.

Slide #29 This is the Vocational School. All residents go to school half day and have a vocational program half day. There are many vocational programs at Jamesburg but whether you get into a good one depends on your behavior, whether there is an opening, and if the classification committee approves you for the program. The choice of work you get sometimes is the decision of someone else.

Slide #30 This is Pre Vocational Assessment Class. Here residents are put through a series of tests to see what trade or job they are best suited for.

Slide #31 This is wood shop. Here you learn to make things with wood. You learn to operate the equiptment. You can make projects but they must be sent home at your expense.

Slide #32 This is another slide of the equipment in the wood shop. It can be dangerous working around machinary if there is a resident who likes to play around. Residents who play and pick fights can be dangerous around machinery.

Slide #33 This is the welding shop. Residents learn the basic of welding. Only really good students get into the job.

Slide #34 This is the Vocational School. Every resident unless he has his G.E.D. or is 18 years old must attend school ½ day.

Slide #35 This is a classroom in the school. As you can see it's like most classrooms. If you are 16 years old and have been out of school for at least one year you can work for your G.E.D.

Slide #36 This is the Art Room. Art is usually an evening recreational class. In Art they make ceramics, weave, paint, but here again anything made must be sent home at the residents expense.

Slide #37 This is the GYM. Residents who are in school have GYM twice a week. Sometimes but not often the GYM might be used for after school recreation.

Slide #38 This is the Barber Shop. Hair cuts are given twice a month. Residents assigned to the barber shop cut your hair. You are told what chair to sit in and sometimes you get a good hair cut sometimes you don't. If the guy cutting your hair doesn't like you he could mess up. Sometimes a guy will ask for cigarettes or food in order for him to give you a good hair cut.

Slide #39 This is Cottage Two Called STU. The special Treatment Unit. Residents with special problems or who have a hard time adjusting to Jamesburg are put here.

Slide #40 This is the sleeping area in S.T.U. It is a dormatory setting and these residents are watched closely by the staff.

Slide #41 This is G.U. the Guidance Unit. If you escape or cause serious problems you can be sent here for as long as 15 days. After 15 days they release you for one day and you can return for another 15 days. When you come to G.U. all your possessions are taken away. You are put in these rooms in your underwear.

Slide #42 This is a G.U. Room. In this room is a cot and a toilet. You do everything in this room. You eat, sleep, and live here for your sentence. Every third day you are allowed to take a shower. Food is shipped in from the B.D.R. often when it gets to you it is cold. While in this room you only have two sheets and one piece of reading material. You are not permitted to talk, smoke, listen to music, or do much of anything except sit and wait out your time.

Slide #43 This is how the arch looks as you leave. Everyone in here waits for this day. This day is long in coming when you do time. And to many of us this is the happiest day of our lives.

TOUR OF JAMESBURG - REVISED

Leave Wilson School

I. Cottage Two - G.U.
   A. Explain Purpose of Cottage Two
      1. Special Treatment Unit (STU)
      2. Self Contained Unit
         a. Own Gym
         b. Own classrooms
      3. Type of Residents
         a. Have learning problems
         b. Needs more emotional support

   B. Explain Guidance Unit (G.U.)
      1. Physical Layout
         a. Individual Cells
         b. Mattress on metal or wooden frame
         c. sink and toilet

      2. Lock-up Procedures
         a. Locked in room (cell)
            1. In underwear
            2. Locked up 24 hours a day
            3. Shower once every 3 days
            4. Can be locked up for only 15 days.
               a. Can be removed in 24 hours
               b. Locked up another 15 days.

         b. Personal items allowed in G.U.
            1. Toothbrush and paste
            2. Soap
            3. Reading materials
            4. Blankets and sheets

         c. Items not permitted
            a. Pillows
            b. Radios
            c. Cigarettes

         d. Operation Procedures
            1. Food brought to Unit
               a. Eat in room
               b. Food brought by truck

            2. Foods not permitted
               a. Sweets
               b. Sodas

            3. No talking
            4. Charges easily gotten.

         e. Problems with G.U.
            1. Is like being in world by yourself
            2. Lonely
            3. Boring
            4. Problems why residents are sent there
               a. Try to get attention
               b. Poor behavior

II. COTTAGE FOUR
- A. Physical Layout
  - 1. OPen dorimatory
    - a. Explain Dorimatory procedures
      - 1. opened 7:30pm
      - 2. locked 7:00am
      - 3. no one is dorm during the day
    - b. Explains gaurds duties at night
  - 2. Day room
  - 3. Common bathroom
  - 4. Locker room
- B. Type of Cottage
  - 1. for drugs users
  - 2. a lot of group therapy
  - 3. Inmates check throughly for drug use
    - a. In cottage
    - b. on furlough

III. COTTAGE SIX
- A. Explain cottage
  - 1. Dorm type
  - 2. second floor-Paraprofessionals
- B. Type of Residents
  - 1. older residents
  - 2. more sophisticated
  - 3. street wise

IV. COTTAGE EIGHT
- A. Dorm type cottage
- B. Program
  - 1. Group orientated
  - 2. Deal with social problem in group therapy

V. BDR BOYS - DINING ROOM
- A. Type Food
  - 1. Starchy
  - 2. little seasoning
  - 3. not prepared to individual taste.
- B. Utensils
  - 1. plastic
  - 2. breaks easily
- C. Dining Room Procedures
  - 1. walked to BDR by officer
    - a. must go with cottage
    - b. taken 3 times a day
  - 2. Must wait in line to be served
  - 3. Must sit in assigned seats
  - 4. Watched by officers during entire meal.

VI. COMMUNITY HOUSE
- A. Visiting area
  - 1. give visiting days
  - 2. How visits are run
  - 3. Problems with having visits there
- B. Used for Meetings
  - 1. Staff
  - 2. Outside organizations

VII. COTTAGE FIVE (Alcohol Program)
- A. Physical Layout
  - 1. Three wings
    - a. A-Wing - residents with alcohol problems
    - b. B-Wing - residents with good conduct.
    - c. C-Wing - new residents or those with behavior problems.
  - 2. Individual Cells
    - A. bed
    - b. foot locker
    - c. sink
    - d. toilet
  - 3. T.V. Room
  - 4. Day room
    - a. cardplaying
    - b. games
  - 5. Classroom
    - a. groups
    - b. cottage library
    - c. classification committee
    - d. church groups
      - 1. bible studies
      - 2. youth groups
- B. Problems living in Cottage Five
  - 1. Dealing with a lot of different people
    - a. loud people
    - b. aggressive people
      - 1. fighters
      - 2. play fiends
      - 3. verbally abusive people
  - 2. Stealing
  - 3. Fears
    - a. being laughed at
    - b. of being hurt
    - c. of showing emotions and feelings.
  - 4. Noisey

VIII. Brief Explanation - J.R.U. (Juvenile Reception Unit)
- A. First place inmates are brought
- B. How person is brought to JRU
- C. Procedures done in JRU
  - 1. Screening Committee
  - 2. Reception Classification
  - 3. Identification cards made
  - 4. Fingerprinting.

IX. HOSPITAL
- A. Explain sick call
  - 1. times
  - 2. medications schedule
- B. Obtaining Medical excuses
- C. Hospital Procedures
  - 1. Admitted to hospital
  - 2. Off ground hospital

X. CENTER
- A. Movement Control
  - 1. All calls out through center
  - 2. Residents must go through center.
    - a. To go anywhere on grounds
    - b. strip search after returning from off grounds.
- B. Administrative Offices
  - 1. Superintendent
  - 2. Classification Office
  - 3. Parole Board
- C. Campus Shop

XI. COTTAGE TEN
- A. Individual unit cottage
  - 1. no bathrooms in unit
  - 2. day room
  - 3. classrooms (school in cottage)
- B. Type of Residents
  - 1. Street wise - more sophisticated cottage
  - 2. behavior problems (need for more discipline)
  - 3. older residents
  - 4. Poor resdients have been transferred to Yepson Unit.

XII. VOCATIONAL SCHOOL
- A. In school programs
  - 1. Welding
  - 2. Pre-Vocational
  - 3. Building Trades
  - 4. Music
  - 5. Communications
- B. Other Vocational Programs
  - 1. Paint Shop
  - 2. Carpenter Shop
  - 3. Auto Shop
  - 4. Mason Shop
  - 5. GreenHouse
  - 6. Graphic Arts
  - 7. Barber Shop
- C. Requirements
  - 1. Classification Committee Assigns
  - 2. First come, First served
  - 3. Put where space is available.

XIII. Return to Wilson School (Academics)

A. Breifly discuss Programs

1. Language Arts
2. Math
   a. I.P.I.
   b. G.E.D.
   c. Supplemental math programs
3. Life Skills
4. Health & Gym
5. Science

B. Policies

1. all inmates must attend. (under 18 years old)
2. ½ day school - ½ day work
3. G.E.D. program offered.

PROJECT OPTION

Alternative Program

I. Slide Presentation (Length 30 minutes)
Give complete description of institution.

II. Discuss Charges and Contraband

Hand out demonstration sheet.
Use overhead projector for discussion.
Go over contraband items.
Go over charges, give examples.

III. Community Programs

Discribe Community Programs

Stokes Forest
Pinelands
Manorwoods
Etc.

IV. Other Correctional Facilities

For young Offenders
For Female Offenders
Turrell
Clinton Womens Prison

V. Discuss Topics on Adult Programs

Routine of Jamesburg
Opinions of why people get into trouble
Juvenile Corrections Program
Success
Peer pressure/Peer rejection.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The following bibliography entries were used to give me understanding and knowledge that was essential in the writing of this program. Even though Project O.P.T.I.O.N. is the development of the writer, each of the authors in this bibliography has had an influence and an effect on my thinking. The concepts they have written about have been thought about, reworked, and has helped Project O.P.T.I.O.N. become a reality.

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